

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR THEMATIC NOMINATION

1 NAME

HISTORIC

West Point on the Eno

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Roxboro Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Durham

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

STATE

North Carolina

CODE
037

COUNTY

Durham

CODE
063

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES - RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES - UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Durham

STREET & NUMBER

Division of Parks and Recreation, City Hall, City Hall Plaza

CITY, TOWN

Durham

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 27701

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds/Durham County Judicial Building

STREET & NUMBER

201 E. Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Durham

STATE

North Carolina 27701

6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Patricia S. Dickinson

ORGANIZATION

Consultant to the City of Durham Planning Department

DATE

December 10, 1983

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall Plaza

TELEPHONE

(919) 683-4137

CITY OR TOWN

Durham

STATE

North Carolina 27701

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE		CHECK ONE	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

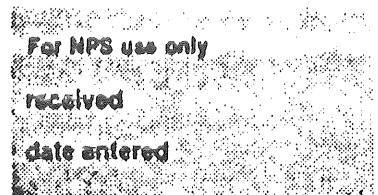
In West Point on the Eno is a forty-acre natural wilderness Durham city park with an historical focus, located along the Eno River at Roxboro Road is a rapidly growing residential and commercial neighborhood at the northern edge of the city limits. The portion of the park comprising at nominated area is an approximately twenty-six acre oval-shaped tract of meadowlands dotted with young hardwoods which slopes gently to the north and west down to the river. Gravel access roads and screened, unobtrusive parking areas ring the tract; a portion of the access road is composed of the old Roxboro Road which nearly parallels the nearby five-lane present arterial highway. This tract was once the site of a lively antebellum community called West Point centered around a gristmill. Remaining on the twenty-six acre tract are three original structures and two sites associated with two of the succession of distinguished families who owned the mill and/or the miller's house. The three original structures are: the c. 1843 two-story vernacular Greek Revival McCown-Mangum House, located near the meadow center; a c. 1880 two-story board-and-batten pack house, about 120 feet southwest of the residence; and a late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century log tobacco barn about 250 feet southwest of the house. The two sites are the ruins of a rock-lined basement and two-story late eighteenth-century chimney about 640 feet north of the house; and the mill site, including the original head and tail race. A reconstructed grist mill, now known as the West Point Mill, about 700 feet northwest of the house. In addition, there is a reconstructed blacksmith shop erected in 1979, located immediately southwest of the West Point Mill, close to the present Roxboro Road; and temporary wooden stage on the east side of the Pack House; and a picnic shelter about 200 feet northwest of the house.

Canopied by large oak trees and facing east about one hundred and fifty feet west of the old Roxboro Road, the McCown-Mangum House is located on a central high point in the meadow, which slopes away from the house to reveal the full fieldstone foundation at the rear. The two-story, one-room-deep frame weatherboarded house with a long one-story rear offset ell is augmented by a full basement. Built around 1843, the house exhibits characteristic elements of mid-nineteenth century vernacular Greek Revival style North Carolina farmhouses in its tin clad, low hipped roof, six-over-six double-hung windows, two-panel doors, trabeated entrance surround, and simple corner boards. An unusual feature of houses of this period is the location of the kitchen in the basement rather than in a separate structure. According to tradition, the basement was carved out from under the McCown-Mangum House sometime after it was built; it is probable that originally there was a separate kitchen building. Sometime early during the residency of the Mangum family from 1893 to 1968, the basement was divided into four rooms: root cellar, kitchen, dining room and breakfast room.

On the main two-story block of the house are brick exterior end chimneys laid in 1:5 common bond. The chimney at the north elevation rests on a stone base, with the south chimney built on a brick base. The chimney stacks, with simple one course corbel caps, pierce the wide overhanging eaves of the low hipped tin roof, which shelters simple stepped chimney shoulders. An interior chimney rises above the hip-roofed one-story rear ell.

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Symmetry characterizes the three-bay main (east) elevation. It features a nearly full-width attached one-story hip roofed porch carried by six chamfered posts connected by a railing with simple square balusters and a rounded handrail. The shallow porch shelters the entrance of double doors, each with a single long and narrow raised panel that is repeated in the apron of the flanking three light sidelights, surmounted by a ten light transom. Other remaining original exterior doors are typical two panel Greek Revival doors. Six-over-six sash windows with slender simple muntins appear on the main and rear elevations. Changes in fenestrations occur in the north elevation of the main block where two four-over-four sash windows flank the chimney on both stories. There are no windows on the south elevation of the main block. The basement of the two-bay ell extending to the west is lighted by three two-over-two sliding windows. The plain window sills and surrounds, the corner boards and porch railing are painted dark charcoal grey making a crisp contrast to the white house.

At the rear elevation of the main block the recessed engaged back porch is reached via a nine step flight of wooden stairs with simple square balusters and rounded handrail. At the south elevation an attached porch with square posts and balusters runs the length of the offset two-room ell. Here, a two-panel door leads to the ell and a set of double doors provides access to the rear of the main block.

Throughout the house much of the original simple one-part window and door trim remains, as do the wide plain baseboards. Some of the original panes of glass survive and are augmented with panes salvaged from a house of similar vintage. The mantelpieces feature deep heavy mantel shelves over a wide plain frieze supported by flat pilasters with simple molded bases and capitals, with minor variations in the molding. The mantelpiece in the dining room and upstairs north bedroom are original and the others were recreated.

On the interior, a centerhall separates two rooms upstairs and two downstairs. Characterized by slender square balusters and rounded handrail, the staircase, located on the north side of the hall, rises in a straight flight from back to front. The stair treads are heart pine, as are the wide boards of the reveal. On the first floor are a heart pine panelled bedroom to the left and a plastered parlor to the right, each with a fireplace. The pine boards of the bedroom have been stripped and left bare: probably one room was painted or wallpapered originally. In the ell to the rear of the parlor is a pine sheathed room with fireplace which the Mangums used as a bed-sitting room, now furnished as a dining room. The second story contains two well-proportioned bedrooms, each with fireplace which serve now as the caretaker's quarters.

With its spacious plastered rooms and attention to detail, the house reflected the high status of the miller in the West Point community. It was last lived in by the Mangum family, a prominent, prosperous Durham family who occupied

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it for over seventy years. During their residency, they furnished it with stylish, Eastlake furniture and son, Hugh's, photographs and artwork. Many of these pieces survive and were loaned or donated to furnish the house after its restoration in 1974. The Mangums cultivated extensive flower and vegetable gardens which have been lost. The restorations of the house included a partial recreation of the gardens by various local garden clubs. Also, during the restoration a non-intrusive modern kitchen was created in an existing room at the rear of the ell. A twelve feet by twenty feet addition to the ell provided space for restrooms.

Located about 120 feet to the southwest of the rear of the McCown-Mangum House is the Pack House, a rustic two-story board-and-batten gable-end, timber-framed outbuilding resting on fieldstone piers and crowned by a new tin roof which replaces earlier shake shingle and tin roofs. Constructed c. 1880, the rectangular forty-two feet by thirty feet building was used for tobacco storage in 1893 when photographer Hugh Mangum partitioned a small portion of the second story for use as a darkroom. A short flight of stairs rises to the main entrance at the west elevation. Two window openings flank the entrance on the first floor and three appear on the second floor. On the east elevation are two window openings on both stories, and on the north and south elevations one window opening lights each floor. Some of these openings have been boarded over with temporary shutters.

The first floor of the interior is an open plank-floored room with an open string flight of stairs along the south wall rising to the second story. In the southwest corner of the second story a six feet by twelve feet area is enclosed with pine boards: written on the west wall, in his hand, is the inscription "Hugh Mangum's Darkroom." Also in pencil is the date "5/25/09" and a few simple arithmetic calculations. At some point after Mangum's death in 1922, this small room was used as a chicken coop, where in 1968, a remarkable cache of five hundred of Mangum's glass negatives was discovered in good condition. The Pack House is currently undergoing renovation to serve as a photographic museum.

The log tobacco barn, believed to have been built some time between the 1890s and 1930, is approximately seventeen feet, six inches square, constructed of sawn logs with flat or square lap notches on hewn sills and a stone foundation. Tin covers the gable roof; the gables are sheathed. Simple shed porches are attached to the east and south sides. The poles from which the tobacco leaves were hung for curing remain in situ.

About fifty feet east of the reconstructed mill (and about 640 feet north of the residence) and rapidly being overrun with vines and young trees, are the remains of a late eighteenth-century coursed stone basement lined with slate slabs, and a red brick chimney laid in a casual combination of Flemish and

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running bonds with double stepped shoulders. The two-story much altered timber-framed house to which they were once attached was razed in 1974. Margaret Nygard, founder of the Eno River Association, recalled that there "seemed to be one house within the other" and that the "symmetry of the original house was quite different" from the later house with its many alterations and additions (telephone interview, October, 1983). John Flowers, architectural historian, wrote in Bull Durham and Beyond (Durham Bicentennial Commission, 1976, p.70), that the house was probably built by George Carrington who owned the mill from 1798 to 1815. The segmental arch at the top of each of the chimney's three fire boxes (in the basement and first and second floors) is a Georgian characteristic that supports a late eighteenth-century construction date. No formal archaeological investigation has been made as yet at this site, but a restoration specialist is about to stabilize the masonry.

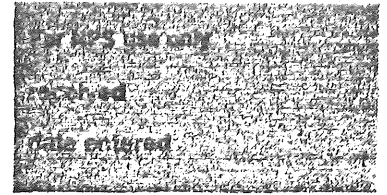
A gristmill operated on the mill site with head and tail races formed by Black Meadow Creek from 1778 to 1942. Nothing is known about the appearance of the early mills. The first visual records of a mill at this site are Hugh Mangum's photographs of Christian's Mill taken at the turn of the century. Christian's Mill was reconstructed according to Mangum's photographs as West Point Mill on the remains of the deep rock basement. The only significant deviation from the original construction was the elevation of the foundation approximately two feet to protect the structure from flooding. Materials for the reconstruction were gleaned from several mills including Gilbert's Mill in Stuart, Virginia, the source of the mill machinery. Facing east, the timber-framed three-story mill with overshot wheel, is sheathed in rough cut pine and has a tin clad gable end roof. A two-story shed roof addition is at the south elevation. In Black Meadow Creek, the head and tail races which power the mill appear to follow their original courses, parallel to and a short distance from the east bank of the Eno River. As yet, no formal archaeological investigation has been made at this site.

The blacksmith shop is a small rectangular one-story gable-roofed building with a shed wing running the full width of the long west side. It is of timber-framed construction, sheathed in rough-cut pine boards placed vertically. The roof is covered with raised seam tin. A timber framing class conducted by master woodwright Roy Underhill reconstructed the blacksmith shop in 1979. Although it is certain that a blacksmith shop of similar size, form and construction was located near the mill in the nineteenth-century, its location is an approximation.

The temporary stage is a raised platform with a flat wooden backdrop and fixed wooden awning. The picnic shelter consists of a gable roof covered with raised seam tin and supported by heavy wooden posts. Both structures were built in the late 1970s.

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Structures, of course, are closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structures. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

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INVENTORY LIST

- P 1. McCown-Mangum House
- C 2. Pack House
- C 3. Tobacco Barn
- C 4. Housesite with Foundation and Chimney
- P 5. West Point Mill
- C 6. Blacksmith Shop
- N 7. Temporary Stage
- N 8. Picnic Shelter

8 SIGNIFICANCE

_____ NATIONAL

_____ STATE

_____ X LOCAL

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Late 18th century,
c. 1843, c. 1880

BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The twenty-acre tract that is now part of the park named West Point on the Eno is important both in its own right and as an evocative reminder of Durham's rural character prior to the emergence of the city's tobacco industry in the 1860s and the accompanying rapid development. The property includes two buildings, two sites and a reconstruction associated with the community known as West Point which grew up around the grist mill established here in 1778 at Shoemaker's Ford. These are: the c. 1843 vernacular Greek Revival McCown-Mangum House, the Pack House, a c. 1880 board-and-batten outbuilding; a late-eighteenth century chimney which marks the site of an early miller's residence; the mill site and head and tail races; and a reconstruction of the gristmill known as the West Point Mill. From its beginning in 1778, the mill tract has passed through a succession of notable owners--men of wealth, justices of the peace, state legislators and three Durham mayors. At its heyday in the mid-nineteenth century it was the energy center of West Point, a community of approximately 300 families served by a post office, general store, grist mill, saw mill, blacksmith shop and cotton gin. Of the twenty-four mills in operation at various times since 1752, along the forty-mile length of the Eno River, a mill at West Point functioned the longest in continuous operation from 1778-1942, and today, the West Point Mill is the only grist mill on the Eno. As representatives of the West Point community, the buildings and sites recall the significance of small settlements that served as Durham County's commercial and social centers prior to the consolidation of activity in Durham at the end of the nineteenth century.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. Associated with the development of West Point, an antebellum mill community and rural economic and social center. In continuous operation from 1778 to 1942, the milling enterprise at West Point was the longest lived of the twenty-four mills that once existed along the Eno River.
- B. Associated with the lives of a number of distinguished North Carolina citizens including three mayors of Durham, state legislators in the General Assembly, justices of the peace, postmasters, and men of wealth and influence.
- C. The c. 1843 McCown-Mangum House embodies the distinctive characteristics of piedmont North Carolina vernacular Greek Revival style houses, including its two-story, single pile with ell form, wide-eaved low-hipped roof, simple corner boards, centerhall plan and two panel doors.
- D. Two sites associated with the mill survive and are likely to yield information important in local history, industrial history and technological development.

During the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Eno Indians, a tribe of the Siouan nation, cleared and cultivated a sizeable tract of meadowlands centered around Shoemaker's Ford on the Eno River about seven miles north of the present city of Durham. The Indians had largely dispersed by the time white settlers moved into this area during the mid-eighteenth century. The new settlers found fertile land, an abundant water source and an easily accessible ford—good reasons to establish their farms and gristmill here. A mill was established here by 1778, and a community, named variously for the current mill owner, grew up around it. The community reached its heyday in the 1840s when it was known as West Point. A mill at West Point operated continuously from 1778 to 1942, longer than any of the other twenty-four known Eno River mills (all destroyed). West Point was a lively community of about three hundred families served by a post office, general store, gristmill, saw mill, blacksmith shop, cotton gin and still house.

Approximately twenty acres remain of the extensive meadowlands originally settled by the Eno Indians and later the site of the rural West Point community which grew, flourished and began its demise while Durham was still a small, unimportant settlement. The West Point community was largely forgotten by the time the expanding city limits grew to absorb the site of the former mill community. Today, this twenty-acre tract is the site of two structures and two sites associated with the mill at West Point and its succession of distinguished owners.

By 1752, two mills were operating a mile west of the future site of the West Point mill, but both had fallen into disuse by 1778, when Charles Abercrombie and William Thetford were granted permission to build a gristmill on the south bank of the Eno River at Shoemaker's Ford. They owned the land on both sides of the river, and in 1789, obtained a land grant of 350 additional acres. Also that year, a new road which became party to the original Durham to Roxboro Road, was created to connect their new mill with another family mill on the Flat River in the northern part of the county. Abercrombie sold the mill property in 1786, to William Ansley, an industrious Quaker, under whose ownership the mill lands grew to 612 acres. Both Abercrombie and Ansley were justices of the peace, listers of taxable property and men of some wealth.

Ansley sold the property in 1798 to Revolutionary War veteran George Carrington under whose ownership the mill lands reached their greatest extent--

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Anderson, Jean B., et.al. "The Story of West Point," TS, located files Survey and Restoration branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC.

Browning, Hugh Conway, "Valley of the Eno: Some of Its Lands--Some of Its People--Some of Its Mills," Hugh Conway Browning Papers, Manuscript Department, Duke University Library, Durham, NC.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 25.75 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	17	688'18.0	3993665	B	17	6883.50	3993750
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	17	6885.50	3993320	D	17	6883.00	3993290
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Durham County Tax Map 779, Block 1: Lots 1C; 1D; the northeast corner of Lot 2 east of Meadow Branch; and Lot 3.

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EXCEPTIONS:

- E. The 1976 reconstruction of the gristmill now known as The West Point Mill was based upon early twentieth-century photographs of Christian's Mill located on the site; utilized the remains of the Christian's Mill foundation, and followed the timber framed construction of the earlier buildings. This is the only gristmill remaining along the Eno River, where there once were twenty-four. The 1979 reconstruction of the blacksmith shop was based upon verbal recollections of the original building and knowledge of other blacksmith shops in piedmont North Carolina.

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1000 acres. Carrington, member of a wealthy local family, operated a store at his grist mill, a common practice in those days. It is possible that Carrington built the two-story house whose site is now marked by the coursed stone basement and the Flemish and common bond chimney which stands just west of the mill site. The house was a substantial log residence, and survived, in a much altered state, until it was razed in 1974. Carrington fell on hard times and sold the mill and lands in 1815 to Herbert Sims, an in-law of the Carrington family through his marriage to Nancy, the daughter of John Carrington, a very early settler in the area.

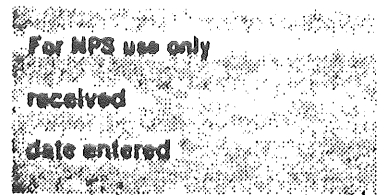
Herbert Sims was a justice of the peace, a representative in the General Assembly, a colonel in the local militia, a miller, manager of large farm operations and allied with two of the most powerful families in the county. After his first wife's death, Sims became a member of the Eno River oligarchy by marrying, in 1831, Rachel Cabe McCown, the widow of the mill owner Moses McCown and daughter of miller owner John Cabe. John Cabe had built one of the first mills on the Eno River in 1779, had served in the Halifax Constitutional Congress in 1776, and represented Orange County in four General Assemblies. According to local legend, each of Cabe's nine daughters married a miller.

Herbert and Rachel Sims are known to have lived on the mill tract, possibly in the now destroyed two-story log house. While Sims owned the Eno Mill, it was called for years by his name--as it had been before him for the previous owners. In 1839, the mill became the location of a post office which was the most westerly mail stop on the Raleigh to Roxboro route. The location for the post office may have been a response to the considerable community of approximately 300 families which had grown up around the mill and associated general store, blacksmith shop, saw mill, cotton gin, and still. The name West Point given to the post office also became the name of the mill. In 1981, Claude Latta, an elderly Durham resident, recalled that his father, who was born in 1852, "would help fetch the mail from the mill at West Point. We've got an envelope in a trunk somewhere with a West Point postmark on it. They wrote West Point out by hand in the post office at the Mill."⁵ The surviving mill ledgers indicated a steady trade with 314 different customers. A wide variety of goods were available including piece goods, thread, ladies dresses, coffins, furniture, groceries, whiskey, books, paper and ink, and popular patent medicines guaranteed to cure an astonishing variety of ailments.

In 1843, during the heyday of West Point, Herbert Sims died. From this time on the large mill tract began to be subdivided. Sims' son Herbert Sims, Jr., a minor, received the mill and 700 acres of land which remained under his mother Rachel's control. Sims, Jr., apparently never controlled the mill and instead, it was managed by his half-brother John Cabe McCown, who became, at some undetermined date, the mill owner.

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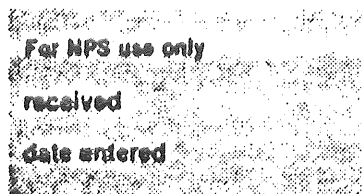
It is likely that John Cabe McCown built the two-story vernacular Greek Revival house, now known as the McCown-Mangum House, located in the meadow south of the mill, soon after his marriage in 1843. It is known that he and his wife lived here for many years and that McCown died in the upstairs south bedroom in 1881. While he and his family lived here the Civil War came to an end and General Sherman stationed General Hugh J. Kilpatrick's cavalry at West Point during the war's closing days.

McCown managed with difficulty to keep the mill going during the lean times of the Reconstruction era, but sold a half interest in the mill to William Lipscomb in 1869. Lipscomb later became the mill owner when in 1873, he foreclosed the mortgage on the mill tract which had been reduced to forty acres through subdivision and sale. Lipscomb married McCown's daughter, Mary, two years later, thus re-associating the mill with the family which had held it for over sixty years. The mill and the house tracts were reunited when Lipscomb bought the home tract as well after McCown's death in 1881. Lipscomb served briefly as Durham's mayor from August, 1883 to May, 1884. McCown's son and Lipscomb's brother-in-law, Moses McCown, served as Durham's mayor from 1897 to 1903.

The mill and house tract were again separated when Lipscomb sold the mill tract to W.J. Christian in 1888, the same year in which Christian became the mayor of Durham. The mill was popularly known as Christian's Mill for many years, long after he sold it in 1909 to J.A.V. Hopkins. Christian's Mill was a popular place for baptisms and picnics at the turn of the century and was featured on a local picture postcard of that era. Lipscomb sold the house tract of 177 acres to Presley J. Mangum in 1889. The Mangum family is one of the oldest in Durham county. Presley J. Mangum was an early Durham postmaster, a cabinetmaker and the owner of a window-sash, door, and blind factory in downtown Durham. In 1893, Mangum moved out of the booming town of Durham to the rural quiet of West Point, a community gradually losing its identity and importance as a social and industrial center. Durham's historian William Boyd gave only passing notice to the once thriving community in his 1925 The Story of Durham. He wrote:

"Nearer to the present city of Durham...was West Point, at the crossing of two roads. Although in 1865, a wing of Sherman's Army was stationed at this place, all memory of it has passed from the minds of the people, and I have found no one who can tell the story of its people and their interests."

Another locally prominent Mangum family member was Presley's eldest son, Hugh, already a talented young photographer when he moved with his family to West Point at the age of sixteen. During the next twenty-nine years, until his death

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from pneumonia in 1922, he traveled throughout the southeast photographing blacks and whites, children at play, workers in the field, and scenes around the family home by the Eno, including the earliest known photographs of the mill, taken around the turn of the century. His photographs exhibit a lively sense of humor and a fascination for the colorful--for gypsies and showgirls costumed in lavish clothes and extraordinary hats. About 500 well-preserved glass negatives were discovered in the Pack House in the late 1960s. This discovery did much to spur community interest in the history of West Point and in the restoration of the McCown-Mangum House and Pack House, surviving structures associated with the mill community.¹⁰ Descendants of the Mangum family continued to live in the house until 1968.

Details are sketchy on the mill's operation from 1888 to 1942. According to a 1909 letter from Mrs. P.J. Mangum to her son Hugh, W.J. Christian leased the mill to an unnamed third party for thirty dollars a year until 1909, when J.A.V. Hopkins bought it. Hopkins operated the grist mill and also raised and sold pigeons on the property. Hopkins died intestate and his heirs sold the property to the Southern Realty and Agency Company in 1935.¹¹ The name of the last miller is not known; local historians however, recorded that the mill functioned until 1942, when a flood cracked the dam, rendering the mill inoperable.¹²

In 1972, the City of Durham acquired both the mill and residence from Erwin Industries which bought the property hoping to develop multi-family housing to accommodate rapid residential and commercial growth in this portion of the city. The city then established a forty-acre park centered around the mill and the residence, creating a highly desirable, large green space near thickly settled new subdivisions and a major shopping mall. The McCown-Mangum House was restored by the Junior League of Durham in 1976 as a house museum. It is furnished with many pieces of Mangum family furniture, art and photographs. The derelict mill stood until the winter of 1973, when it collapsed during a freshet, but not before the building was carefully documented with photographs and drawings. The mill was reconstructed in 1976, under the auspices of the Friends of West Point, Inc., a citizen advisory board to the Durham Parks and Recreation Department. The reconstruction utilized the remainder of the Christian's Mill foundation materials at its original site and the head and tail races. The Pack House is in the process now of renovation for use as a photographic museum where Hugh Mangum's cameras, studio props, and photographs will be displayed.

NOTES

¹ North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Community Development, Division of Parks and Recreation, Master Planning Unit, Eno River State Park Master Plan, (Raleigh: 1979), p.3; see also Eno, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Autumn, 1976).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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² Jean Bradley Anderson, Hugh Conway Browning, Mary Claire Engstrom, Margaret C. Nygard, "The Story of West Point," TS, (n.p.: 1972), p.10. A copy of this invaluable, well documented typescript is located in the files of the Survey and Restoration Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh. An abbreviated copy is located in the office of the McCown-Mangum House at West Point on the Eno, Durham. Hereinafter cited as Anderson, "The Story of West Point." For general information on gristmills and the mills of the Eno River Valley see Eno, Vol.7. Special issue: Papers from the seminar on waterwheels and windmills held in Durham, North Carolina, July, 1978 in the Bicentennial year of West Point on the Eno.

³ Anderson, "The Story of West Point," p.11.

⁴ Anderson, "The Story of West Point," p.12.

⁵ Eno River calendar, October, 1981. The Eno River Association publishes an annual calendar focusing on a different aspect of the river's history each year. The calendars, published since 1972, are lavishly illustrated and well documented.

⁶ Anderson, "The Story of West Point," pp.13-14.

⁷ Anderson, "The Story of West Point," p.14.

⁸ Anderson, "The Story of West Point," p.15. See also "The McCown-Mangum House (a short guide)", TS, (n.p.:n.d.), copies located in the North Carolina Room, Durham County Public Library, Durham and at the McCown-Mangum House, West Point on the Eno. This is a docent's guide, probably written in 1978.

⁹ Anderson, "The Story of West Point," p.16. See also Hugh Conway Browning, "Valley of the Eno: Some of Its Lands—Some of Its People—Some of Its Mills," TS, Hugh Conway Browning Papers, 1973-c.1975, Manuscript Department, Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Browning, "Valley."

¹⁰ David Page, "The Darkroom in the Pack House," Eno, 3, No.1, (1975), p.3. See also "The Hugh Mangum Museum of Photography," brochure c.1978, published by the Associates of the Friends of West Point, copies available at the McCown-Mangum House, West Point on the Eno.

¹¹ Anderson, "The Story of West Point," pp.49-50.

¹² Browning, "Valley", p.3.

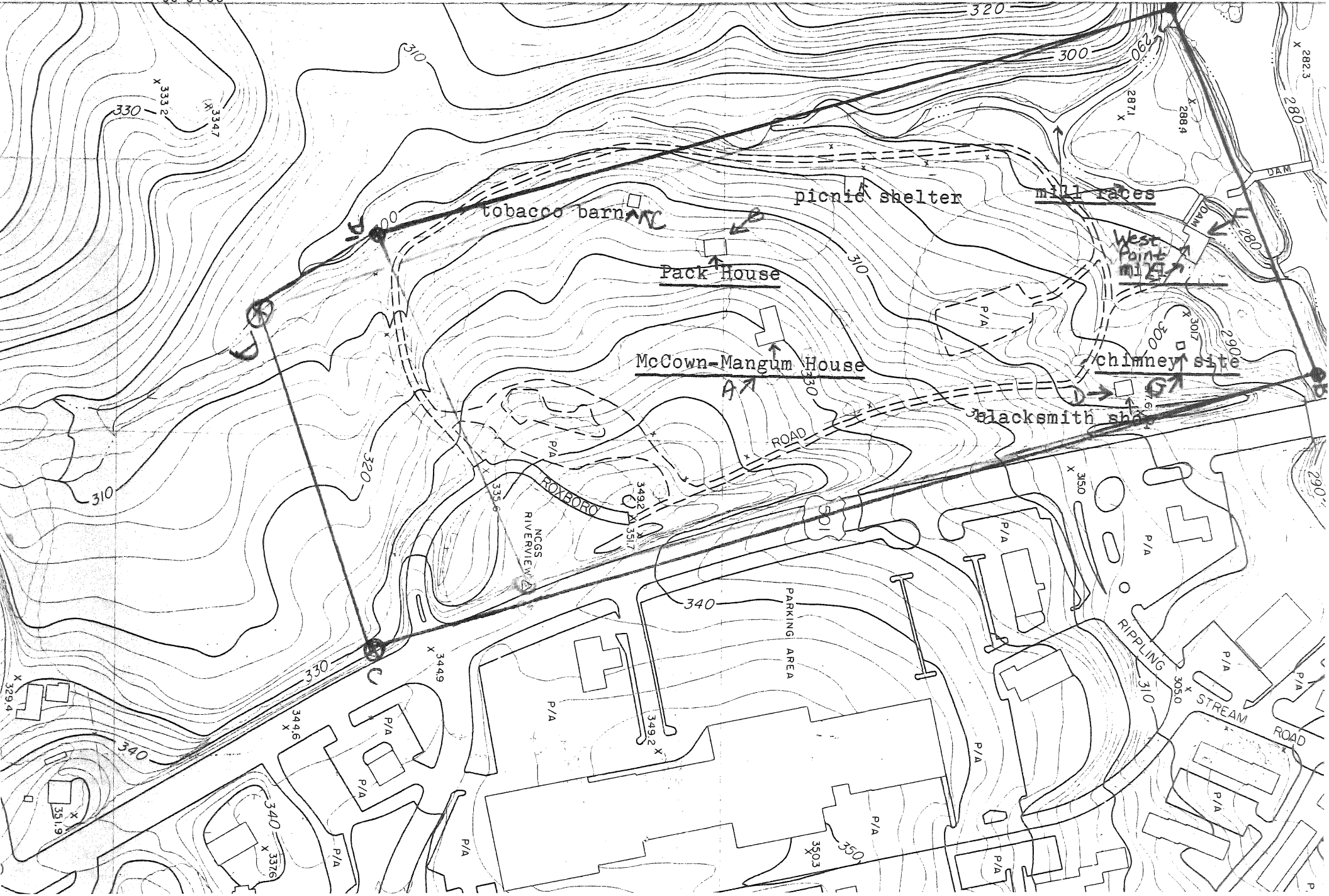
WEST POINT ON THE ENO

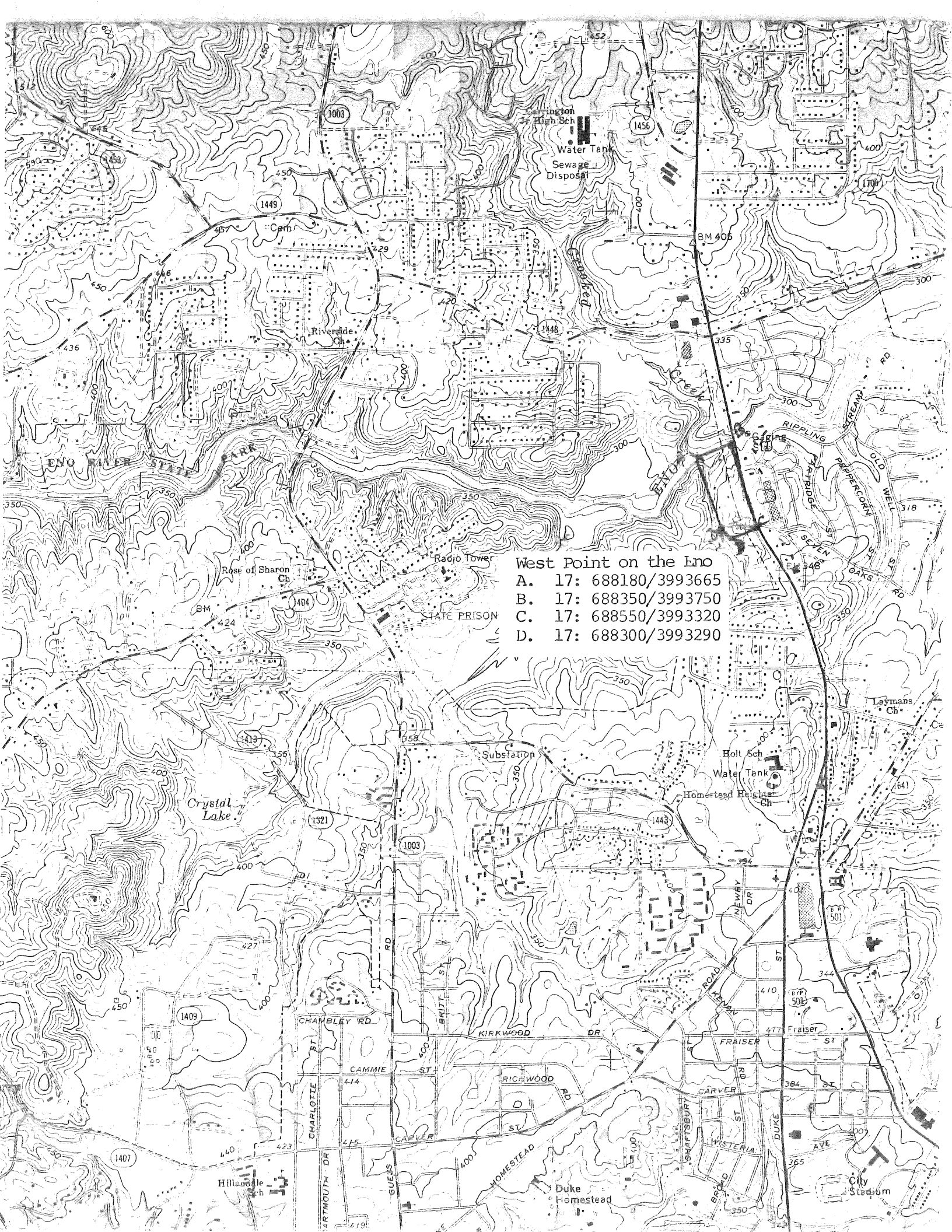
topographical map--Engineering Department, Durham City Hall, sheet #0824

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West Point on the Eno

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- B. 17: 688350/3993750
- C. 17: 688550/3993320
- D. 17: 688300/3993290

